GRACE PARISH HOURS

Sunday
Morning Prayer 9:30 AM
Mass 8:00 and 10:00 AM
Nursery available at 10:00 AM

Wednesday
Mass 6:00 PM

Saturday
Mass 5:00 PM

Office Hours: 8:00 AM to 12:00 NOON
Monday - Friday
(309) 344-1556
gracechurch@grics.net
gracegalesburg.com

Servers for December:

5: Lector: Crystal Tribbett; Sub Deacon: Steve Carlson; Server: Jim Stewart; Usher: Marilyn Swegle; Altar Guild: Gayle Stewart.
12: Lector: Bambi Strom; Sub Deacon: Jerry Strom; Server: Tom Tribbett; Ushers: Linda Pullins; Altar Guild: Marilyn Swegle.
19: Lector: Jan Guenther; Sub Deacon: Steve Carlson; Server: Mike Haptonstahl; Ushers: Harold & Sanda Curtis; Altar Guild: Judy Boynton.
26: Lector: Gayle Stewart; Sub Deacon: Mike Haptonstahl; Server: Jim Stewart; Usher: Marilyn Swegle; Altar Guild: Marlowe Cowley.

Servers for January:

2: Lector: Crystal Tribbett; Sub Deacon: Mike Haptonstahl; Server: Jim Stewart; Usher: Marilyn Swegle; Altar Guild: Edith Cox.
9: Lector: Bambi Strom; Sub Deacon: Jerry Strom; Server: Tom Tribbett; Ushers: Linda Pullins; Altar Guild: Diana Hallstrom.
16 : Lector: Jan Guenther; Sub Deacon: Steve Carlson; Server: Jim Stewart; Usher: Donna McCarthy; Altar Guild: Gayle Stewart.
23: Lector: Gayle Stewart; Sub Deacon: Jerry Strom; Server: Mike Haptonstahl; Ushers: Harold & Sanda Curtis; Altar Guild: Marilyn Swegle.
30: Lector: Bambi Strom; Sub Deacon: Steve Carlson; Server: Jim Stewart; Usher: Marilyn Swegle; Altar Guild: Judy Boynton.

Grace Notes

December 2010
January 2011

Women's Wellness Group

We are meeting at the Sandburg Mall every Thursday at 6:00 PM.

Come and join us for a discussion of the teaching series on the letters of St. Paul by our own Father Michael Brooks!

Theology on Tap!

Wednesday, 1 December
"Santa Claus is Coming to Town?"

Wednesday, 26 January
TBA

7:00 PM

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Monthly Requiem Masses

Wednesday, 1 December
Wednesday, 26 January
6:00 PM

Parish Advent Brunch at Soangetaha C.C.

Sunday, 12 December Following the 10:00 Mass

Watch for details on Sundays!

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Annual Parish Meeting:
Sunday, 16 January 2011
At coffee hour, immediately following
the 10:00 Mass

Please have any and all reports to the Parish Office
by the first of the year!

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Offering envelopes for 2011 are available in the Parish Hall.
Please write your name on the sheet
<u>next</u> to the number on the envelope.

"Equipping the Saints"

Classes to enrich your understanding
of our Christian Faith.

Friday, 10 December

Class #1, 7:00 – 7:50 PM:
**"Gentlemen (and Ladies),
Start Your Engines"**
(An introduction to the Greek alphabet, in anticipation of the spring semester class in new Testament Greek!)
Fr. Jason Miller

Class #2, 8:00 – 8:50 PM:
"St. Paul and His Epistles"
Fr. Michael Brooks

Class #3, 9:00 – 9:50 PM:
"Anglican Spirituality: an Overview"
Fr. Thomas Janikowski

These classes are free and open to the public!
Please come and join in the fun!

Coffee, cookies and other refreshments will be provided. Please feel free to bring a Bible, paper and writing utensils if you so wish.

Call Fr. Tom at 351-1947 for more information.

The Bishop is Coming!

Bishop Morales will make his first annual parish visit to us at 6:00 PM on Wednesday, 8 December and celebrate mass with several confirmations and receptions!

We will host a dinner for him after mass, and all the parish are encouraged to turn out for this delightful evening!

Please be here to welcome the Bishop to Grace Church and show him all of our love and hospitality!

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St. Andrew's Church
Annual Cookie Exchange
and
Luncheon
Saturday, December 4, 2010
12:00 noon
Please bring 4 dozen cookies
of the same recipe to share!
Also bring a copy of your recipe.
Please call Marlene Crandell for reservations.
697-1143 or email: mjc2422@um.att.com

The Nativity Icon

The Nativity icon on the front cover of this month's "Grace Notes" is a perfect example of the teaching value of traditional iconography. The icon is not a "piece of artwork" as we tend to think of them – it is a "sharing on the reality" of an event in the life of our Lord or in the life or personage of Holy Mother Church. The reprinted information below is offered as a guide to this classic icon.

On the icon of the Nativity of our Lord, the whole Gospel message of the incarnation of our Savior from the Virgin Mary is depicted, along with other details added from the holy Tradition. On many icons of the Nativity, there are a multitude of details, on others less. On the diagram shown here, taken from a drawing for an icon, we can identify at least 8 major elements.

(1) The focus of the icon, of course, is on the birth of our Lord from His most pure virgin mother Mary; She is shown larger than any of the other figures, reclining on a mat, and looking not at her new-born Son, but rather with love and compassion towards her spouse, St Joseph the Betrothed (7), seeing his affliction and bewilderment over this most strange and divine birth;. He is shown in the left bottom corner, conversing with Satan, disguised as an old shepherd. The posture of St Joseph is one of doubt and inner trouble, for he wondered if it might be possible that the conception and birth were not by some secret human union; how blessed he was to serve the Mother of God and her divine Son, in spite of these thoughts and temptations, and to protect her from the evil gossip of the people who could not yet possibly understand so great a mystery. Our Lord is shown in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger, "for there was no room for them in the inn." (cf. Luke 2) The back-drop for the manger is a dark cave (3), which immediately reminds us of the cave in which our Lord was buried 33 years later, wrapped in a shroud. In the cave are an ox and ass, details not mentioned by the Gospels, but which are an invariable feature of every icon of the Nativity; the scene is included to show the fulfillment of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "the ox knows his Owner, and the ass his Master's crib, but Israel does not know Me, and the people has not regarded Me" (Isaiah 1:3). (2) Above this central composition, in the very center of the icon is the wondrous star coming from heaven, which led the magi (6) to the place where our Savior lay; It reminds us of the heavenly orb we see on icons of the Theophany, or Pentecost, wherever divine intervention is indicated.

The holy angels (4) are seen both glorifying God and bringing the good tidings of the Lord's birth to the shepherds (5). The fact that Jewish shepherds and heathen magi were among the first to worship our Lord shows us the universality of this great event, meant for the salvation of all mankind.

The final detail of this icon, the scene of the washing of the Lord (8) is an element that has caused some controversy over the ages. In some churches of the holy monasteries of Mount Athos, the scene in the frescoes has been deliberately obliterated and replaced with bushes or shepherds; there was a prevailing opinion that this scene was degrading to Christ, who had no need of washing, being born in a miraculous manner from a pure virgin. But we retain this image on our icons, being part of the holy tradition passed on to us; truly it does not degrade the Lord, but magnifies Him.

Finally, as we look at the icon as one united composition, we can only be filled with joy, not only because of the bright colors and the festive activity depicted thereon, but for the joyous news of our salvation so clearly proclaimed by it. In it, all creation is rejoicing at the birth of our Lord: the heavens (a star and angels); the earth (the mountains, plants and animals}; and especially mankind, represented most perfectly in the figure of the new Eve, the most pure Mother of God.

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

(From the Church of the Nativity in Erie, Pennsylvania)

Christmas 2010

Friday, 24 December

VIGIL OF THE NATIVITY

8:00 PM: Vigil Mass
11:00 PM: Matins & Lauds
11:30 PM: the 1st Mass of Christmas
"Mass at Midnight"

Saturday, 25 December

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

10:00 AM: the 2nd Mass of Christmas
"Mass at Daybreak"
1:00 PM: the 3rd Mass (at Zion, Brimfield")
"Mass of Daytime"

5:00 PM: Vigil Mass of Sunday

Sunday, 26 December
ST. STEPHEN, PROTOMARTYR

8:00 AM: Said Mass in the Chapel
10:00 AM: Sung Mass in the Church
1:00 PM: Sung Mass at Zion, Brimfield

*Jesus Christ made **no excuses** to avoid giving his life for us – let us likewise be always ready and willing to lovingly receive Him!*

A New Church Year

My Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

With the First Sunday of Advent, a new Church year is upon us, and along with it the excitement of the upcoming Christmas season. As always, I remind us all that Advent is a quiet and holy time, best used as a time for spiritual preparation for the season to come. It is often difficult to not get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season, and it can be easy to lose one's focus.

As traditional Anglican Christians and as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to be different – our actions do not always match those of the secular world around us, and that is exactly how it is supposed to be. I urge you to find time for quiet contemplation during these weeks…time for silent prayer, time for spiritual reading and for becoming more engaged with God's Word in Holy Scripture. Time thus spent will not be time wasted, by any means. Rather, it might likely be the best investment of your time that you can make, and I do not doubt that the dividends it will pay may likely be the greatest return you will receive on any investment this year!

With this new year, I ask us all to re-commit to faithful attendance at Sunday Masses. The sharing of this wonderful mystery is the greatest and most powerful action any human being can experience on any day in this life, for it permeates and reaches into every moment of the rest of our lives – that week and any given week. Every mystery, every miracle and every challenge we witness or experience is touched by that "opening of heaven" of which we partake in the Divine Liturgy. Avail yourself to the greatest blessing in this life - be with your beloved family at Mass each and every Sunday and Holy Day.

It is with abundant joy in our Savior Jesus Christ that Shelly and I wish each of you a blessed Advent and a very Merry Christmas! Christ is born! Glorify him! I remain,

Faithfully Yours in Christ Jesus,

Father Thomas,
Your Priest